

PARTIAL TRANSCRIPTION - ORIGINAL FOLLOWS

3. FORMIDABLE OBSTACLES CONFRONT THE INSURGENTS IN THEIR EFFORT TO OVERTHROW A DETERMINED, RUTHLESS, AND WELL-ARMED REGIME, AND THE OPPOSITION'S GOALS REMAIN GENERALLY UNARTICULATED AND VAGUE. NONETHELESS, A "VICTORY" BY THE OPPOSITION (WHICH IS BY NO MEANS ASSURED) COULD HAVE MIXED BLESSINGS FOR UNITED STATES' HUMANITARIAN, DEVELOPMENTAL, AND POLITICAL INTEREST IN THIS COUNTRY AND REGION. THE FALL OF A RADICAL LEFTIST AND SOVIET BACKED REGIME COULD WELL HAVE POSITIVE REPERCUSSIONS FOR US THROUGHOUT THE THIRD WORLD BY DEMONSTRATING THAT OUR ADVERSARIES' VIEW OF THE "INEVITABLE" COURSE OF HISTORY IS NOT NECESSARILY ACCURATE. LIKEWISE, DESPITE THE PAUCITY OF SPECIFIC INFORMATION, AN OPPOSITION-LED REGIME MIGHT WELL BE MUCH MORE AMENABLE TO THE RETURN OF A U.S. PRESENCE IN THE DEVELOPMENTAL FIELD IN THIS COUNTRY. CONVERSELY, A REGIME BASED ESSENTIALLY ON THE "FUNDAMENTALIST" TENETS OF ISLAM WOULD PROBABLY NOT PLACE HIGHEST PRIORITY ON SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC REFORM (E.G. THE "MANIFESTO" OF THE "ISLAMIC PARTY OF AFGHANISTAN" CALLS FOR THE REIMPOSITION OF "PURDAH," THE SUBJECTION OF WOMEN TO A LIFE OF EXCLUSION, AND THE PROBABLY INEVITABLE WIDESPREAD [ILLEG] AIMED AT KHALOIS WOULD HAVE NEGATIVE HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS, NO MATTER HOW JUSTIFIED RETRIBUTION AGAINST SOME KHALOI OFFICIALS MIGHT APPEAR TO BE, ON BALANCE, HOWEVER, OUR LARGER INTERESTS, GIVEN THE DRA'S EXTREMELY CLOSE TIES TO MOSCOW, WOULD PROBABLY BE SERVED BY THE DEMISE OF THE TARAKI AND AMID REGIME. END OF SUMMARY.

4. INTRODUCTION: SINCE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN (DRA) SIXTEEN MONTHS AGO, THE LEADERSHIP AND RANK AND FILE OF THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF AFGHANISTAN (PDPA) -- THE KEY POLITICAL ELEMENT IN THE COUNTRY, WHOSE PRINCIPLE ROOTS LIE IN A SMALL GROUP IN THE MILITARY, A SEGMENT OF THE INTELLIGENTSIA, AND URBAN YOUTH -- HAVE BEEN TRYING TO ALTER DRASTICALLY AFGHANISTAN'S TRADITIONAL POLITICAL AND SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS, WHICH AFGHANISTAN'S [ILLEG] BACKWARDNESS, THIS REVOLUTIONARY REGIME'S [2 WORDS ILLEG] PROBABLY, IN THEMSELVES, DESERVE GENUINE SUPPORT FROM MOST [4 LINES ILLEG]

PP RUOMH

DC RUOMH 6025 L/1 220745

ZNY CCCCC ZIN

P R 160702Z AUG 79

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUOMH/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5240

RUOMH/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 3033

RUOMH/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 9177

RUOMH/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 681

RUOMH/AMEMBASSY JEDDA 365

RUOMH/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1751

RUOMH/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 1625

RUOMH/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 7240

RUOMH/AMEMBASSY PARIS 3217

RUOMH/AMEMBASSY TEHRAN 401

RUOMH/AMEMBASSY TIFLIS 3217

RUOMH/AMEMBASSY URGANCHI 3217

RUOMH/AMEMBASSY UZBEKISTAN 3217

C O R F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 4 PAGE 0051

CINCPAC: ALSO FOR POLAD

U.S. INFO: 6025 L-15-79 (TAYLOR, JAMES E.) CR-6

TARGET: POLAD, FINE, FINE, AF

SUBJ: CLOUD NATURE OF THE AFGHAN OPPOSITION

1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT.)

2. SUMMARY: GROWING OPPOSITION TO THE KHALQI REGIME OF PRESIDENT NOOR MOHAMMAD TARAKI AND PRIME MINISTER HAFIZULLAH AMIN IS POSED BY MANY DISPARATE ELEMENTS WHO ARE MOTIVATED BY DIFFERING GRIEVANCES. FEARS REGARDING THE REPRESSION OF ISLAM AND RESENTMENT OF WHAT THEY PERCEIVE AS A SELL-OUT TO RUSSIA OF AFGHANISTAN'S NATIONAL SOUL ARE THE PRIMARY FACTORS FUELING THE VARIOUS OPPOSITION GROUPS STRUGGLING FOR A DRAMATIC CHANGE IN THIS REVOLUTIONARY REGIME. SHORT OF MEETING SOME DEMANDS FOR JUST SUCH A DRAMATIC CHANGE, THE TARIKAT-UL-JAHAD LEADERSHIP HAS LITTLE MANEUVERING ROOM AND FEW OPTIONS WHICH WOULD PRESENT VIABLE CHANCES OF REVERSING THE CURRENT TREND. CONTINUED COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS, THEREFORE, ARE PROBABLY ON THE MIND, COMBINED WITH A LARGER SOVIET EFFORT TO SAVE THE AFGHAN REVOLUTION ITSELF. IF NOT THIS PARTICULAR LEADERSHIP, DESPITE ITS SUCCESSFUL TIME PAST, THE OPPOSITION REMAINS FRAGMENTED AND ESSENTIALLY WITHOUT LEADERSHIP.

VV ESAB127JC494

PP RUOHOR.

DE RUSL K #0251/2 2288745

ZNY CCCCC ZIH

P R 163700Z AUG 79

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5261

RUCMGU/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 3694

RUSBGU/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 9178

RULJPS/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 482

RUCRA/AMEMBASSY JIDDA 366

RUDTC/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1752

RUEHSD/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 1829

RUSBAE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 7247

RUFHPS/AMEMBASSY PARIS 3218

RUCUHR/AMEMBASSY TEHRAN 402

RUMHQA/CINCPAC

RUPHNA/USMISSION USKATO 34

BT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 4 KASUL 5251

CINCPAC; ALSO FOR POLAD

OPPOSITION MOVEMENT WHOSE INSURGENCY OPERATIONS HAVE
NIBBLED AWAY AT THE GOVERNMENT'S CAPACITY TO CONTROL THE COUNTRY
OUTSIDE MAJOR POPULATION CENTERS -- ALTHOUGH THE REGIME CAN
STILL RESPOND QUICKLY AND FORCEFULLY (AS DEMONSTRATED IN KABUL
ON AUGUST 5) TO DIRECT CHALLENGES NEAR THE COUNTRY'S POLITICAL
HEART. NONETHELESS, THE OPPOSITION, ALBEIT STILL FRAGMENTED
AND GENERALLY LEADERLESS, IS WIDESPREAD AND APPARENTLY FUELED
BY DEEPLY-HELD GRIEVANCES THAT HAVE CAUSED THOUSANDS OF

INSURGENTS TO RISK ALL IN AN ATTEMPT TO OVERTHROW A REGIME
WHICH PROFFERS THAT IT HAS ONLY THE WELFARE OF THE AFGHAN
NATION AT HEART.

5. PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS OF THE OPPOSITION EQUATION: THE APPO-
SITION TO THE DRA IS NOT A MONOLITHIC AND COORDINATED INSUR-
GENCY, SINCE A NUMBER OF DISPARATE ELEMENTS ARE STRUGGLING
FOR VARIOUS REASONS FOR A DRASTIC CHANGE IN THIS REGIME.
THE REBEL GROUPS ACTUALLY ENGAGED IN COMBAT AGAINST THE AFGHAN
ARMY APPEAR TO DRAW THEIR MANPOWER FROM VILLAGES AND TRIBES,
WHICH CONSTITUTE ANYWHERE FROM 62-90 PERCENT OF AFGHANISTAN'S
POPULATION. THESE GENERALLY ILLITERATE SEGMENTS OF AFGHAN
SOCIETY ARE TRADITIONAL FOES OF ANY CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AT
KABUL, ALTHOUGH MANY ARE APOLITICAL IF LEFT ALONE. HOWEVER,
SOME VILLAGERS -- FOR VARIOUS REASONS (E.G., ECONOMIC) --
UNDOUBTEDLY SUPPORT THE DRA, SINCE THE RURAL POPULATION ALSO
SERVES AS THE GOVERNMENT'S MANPOWER POOL FOR ITS MILITARY
ENLISTED RANKS. THUS, RESISTANCE, HOWEVER WIDESPREAD, HAS
NOT YET COMPLETELY STYMIED THE REGIME'S ABILITY TO MEET
ITS NEEDS FOR UNSKILLED TROOPS, ALTHOUGH PROBLEMS HAVE
INDEED BEEN ENCOUNTERED.

TO THE OPPOSITION'S EFFORTS. RELATIVES OF THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN ELIMINATED OR OTHERWISE PERSECUTED BY THIS REGIME UN-
DERSTAND THE SITUATION, AND IS THE TRADITION IN THIS
FRAGMENTED SOCIETY. THE LONGER THIS LEADERSHIP SUR-
VIVES TO PUSUE ITS PAST POLICIES, THE LARGER THIS PARTICULAR
GROUP WILL BECOME. DISHONORED AND ISOLATED LEFTISTS (MOSTLY
PASCHANISMS, BUT ALSO SOME DISAFFECTED KHALQIS) ALSO SEEK
CHANGE, NOT LEAST OF ALL BECAUSE THEY BELIEVE THE TARAKI-
MIN TEAM HAS BETRAYED THE GENUINE SPIRIT OF THE REVOLUTION,
AND HAS SQUANDERED THE INITIAL GOOD-WILL WHICH GREETED THE
ADVENT OF A REFORMIST GOVERNMENT SIXTEEN MONTHS AGO. DIS-
ILLUSIONED ELEMENTS OF THE MILITARY, WHO MAY SEE NO END TO
THE FIGHTING AND KILLING, REPRESENT A POTENTIALLY CRITICAL
SEGMENT OF THE OPPOSITION, ESPECIALLY IF DESERTIONS AND DE-
FECTIONS INCREASE, OR IF FURTHER EXPLOSIONS LIKE AUGUST 5
OCCUR. THE OPPOSITION GROUPS HEADQUARTERED IN PESHAWAR
REPRESENT DISSENT FROM THE FORMER "ESTABLISHMENT," WHO GEN-
ERALLY LOOK WITH DISDAIN UPON THE KHALQIS, MOST OF WHOM DO
NOT TRACE THEIR LINEAGE TO THE ELITE CLASSES. IN THEMSELVES,
HOWEVER, THESE PARTICULAR "LIBERATION FRONTIS" PROBABLY DO NOT
POSE A SERIOUS CHALLENGE TO THE DRA, AND FOR THE AFGHAN
NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT (ANLF), ET AL, TO PLAY AN IMPORTANT
FUTURE ROLE THEY WILL PROBABLY HAVE TO SETTLE THEIR OWN
INTRAGROUP DIFFERENCES, AND ESTABLISH SOME CONVINCING
ECNA SIDES FOR CARRYING OUT INSURGENT OPERATIONS NEARER
THE POLITICAL HEART OF THE COUNTRY. GROUPS WITH LESS THAN
CITY GOALS ARE ALSO HARASSING THE GOVERNMENT, AS REGULAR
BANDITS AND OTHER CRIMINAL ELEMENTS STEP UP THEIR OPERATIONS
ALONG SEVERAL OF THE COUNTRY'S PRINCIPAL HIGHWAYS, THEREBY
CONTRIBUTING IN NO SMALL MEASURE TO THE OVERALL BREAKDOWN
IN LAW AND ORDER IN THE COUNTRYSIDE.

7. MAJOR OPPOSITION GROUPS OPERATING WITHIN AFGHANISTAN:
MAJOR AREAS OF SUCCESSFUL OPPOSITION OPERATIONS HAVE BEEN
THE EASTERN PROVINCE OF NURISTAN (WHERE THE NURISTANIS FOR
MONTHS APPEARED INTERESTED ONLY IN DENYING THE REGIME ACCESS
TO THEIR RUGGED HOMELAND, BUT WHO MAY NOW ALSO BE ASSOCIATED
WITH THE FIGHTING IN THE PARJUNIR VALLEY MUCH NEARER KABUL),
PARIAT PROVINCE SOUTHEAST OF THE CAPITAL (WHOSE OPPOSITION
MOVEMENTS MAY BE MOST CLOSELY RELATED TO THE REFUGEES IN
PAKISTAN, AS WELL AS TO THE VARIOUS "FORMAL" GROUPS (ESPECIALLY
TO THAT OF UL-BUDDIN HEKMATIYAR AND SEYED AHMAD RAILANI) HEAD-
QUARTERED IN PESHAWAR, AND WHERE EFFORTS MAY HAVE REACHED
THE CITIES OF GARDEZ AND SHAZI); THE LUNAR-LIKE CENTRAL
REGION OF THE COUNTRY (WHOSE HAZARA/SHI'A POPULATION, THE
HEAVIEST BURDEN ON THE AFGHAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL LADDER, IS
NOT

10. BY CONTRAST, THE REGIME'S PRINCIPAL REFORM PROGRAMS (REDUCING ILLITERACY, LAND REFORM, ELIMINATION OF THE TRADITIONAL "BRIDE PRICE," AND BANNING OF USURY PRACTICES) PROVOKED SOME SCATTERED OPPOSITION, BUT THE OGGING INSURGENCY IS NOT PRIMARILY SUSTAINED BY HOSTILITY TO THESE PROGRAMS, NO MATTER HOW UNPOPULAR THEY MAY HAVE BEEN. WHAT SEEMS CLEAR IS THAT DEEPLY- FELT EMOTIONS ARE NECESSARY TO CAUSE EVEN AFGHANS TO TAKE UP ARMS AGAINST MODERN WEAPONS WIELDED BY A DETERMINED AND RUTHLESS GOVERNMENT, AND WHAT SUCH EMOTIONS DO, IN FACT, PREVAIL ON THE CURRENT AFGHAN POLITICAL SCENE.

11. FEW POLICY OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE TO THE REGIME TO REVERSE THE PRESENT TREND: THE DRA LEADERSHIP APPEARS TO HAVE VERY FEW POLITICAL OPTIONS AT ITS DISPOSAL WHICH, IF ADOPTED, WOULD HAVE VIABLE CHANCES OF REVERSING THE CURRENT TIDE. THE GOVERNMENT HAS DECLARED A NUMBER OF ITS PROGRAMS (MOST NOTABLY LAND REFORM) "SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED," BUT THIS ACTION HAS HAD LITTLE NOTICEABLE IMPACT ON THE LEVEL OF FIGHTING, A DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD SUPPORT THE CONTENTION THAT THE REGIME'S REFORMS DID NOT REPRESENT ROOT CAUSES FOR THE GROWTH OF THE OPPOSITION.

12. TO ADDRESS THE RELIGIOUS ISSUE, THE LEADERSHIP HAS MOUNTED AN INTENSE PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN, INCLUDING REPEATED ASSURANCES BY TARAKI AND AMIN IN THEIR PUBLIC SPEECHES THAT THE DRA IS ABSOLUTELY NOT OPPOSED TO ISLAM. MOREOVER, AN EARLY AUGUST CONCLAVE IN KABUL OF OVER ONE HUNDRED "ISLAMIC SCHOLARS" ISSUED A STATEMENT SUPPORTING THE "DEVOUTNESS" OF THE REGIME AND CLAIMING THAT THE DRA ACTUALLY IS THE "PROTECTOR" OF ISLAM. NONETHELESS, THIS PARTICULAR EFFORT MAY WELL HAVE COME TOO LATE TO CONVINCE THE MASSES THAT THE KHALQI REGIME DOES NOT HAVE THE REDUCTION OF ISLAM IN AFGHANISTAN AS ONE OF ITS PRIMARY GOALS.

13. MODIFICATIONS IN THE DRA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SOVIET UNION MIGHT POSSIBLY MOLLIFY THE OPPOSITION TO SOME EXTENT, BUT IT IS DIFFICULT TO IDENTIFY MEANINGFUL WAYS THE KHALQIS COULD DO THIS WITHOUT RISKING THEIR OWN SELF-DESTRUCTION. SINCE THE SOVIET CONNECTION IS THE CRUCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE DRA'S CURRENT LEADERSHIP, THUS, THE TARAKI-AMIN TEAM FACES THE DILEMMA OF A GUARANTY THAT THE DRA PROBABLY COULD NOT SURVIVE WITHOUT EXTENSIVE SOVIET SUPPORT, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME, THAT VERY SUPPORT SERVES TO FAN THE FLAMES OF THE NATIONALIST OPPOSITION.

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PARTIAL TRANSCRIPTION - ORIGINAL FOLLOWS

15. AN OPPOSITION "VICTORY" WOULD HAVE MIXED BLESSINGS

[6 LINES ILLEG]

IN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FIELD WOULD PROBABLY RESULT FROM THE DEMISE OF THE DRA, EVEN THOUGH VERY MUCH [ILLEG] INFORMATION ON THE SPECIFIC OPPOSITION GOALS IS NOT AVAILABLE. WITHIN THE COUNTRY, ONE OPPOSITION GROUP (THE "NATIONAL FRONT OF THE ISLAMIC REVOLUTION OF AFGHANISTAN") HAS PUBLICLY ADVOCATED THE CONVOCAION OF A "LOYA JIRCAH" (THE TRADITIONAL AFGHAN SUPREME COUNCIL CALLED TO DISCUSS MAJOR DECISIONS AFFECTING THE COUNTRY), AND THUS OUR SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES WOULD BE SERVED, ASSUMING SUCH A MEETING WOULD INDEED EVER TAKE PLACE.

TO: DIRECTOR, CIA
FROM: AMEMBASSY, KABUL
SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN
REF: AMEMBASSY, KABUL 6251
AMEMBASSY, PLEIKU
AMEMBASSY, JILDA
AMEMBASSY, LOGON
AMEMBASSY, MOGHA
AMEMBASSY, NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY, PARIS
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AMEMBASSY, USDAO 36

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CINCPAC: ALSO FOR POLAD

13. A GENUINE CHANGE IN THE COMPOSITION OF THE DRA LEADERSHIP (NOT MERELY A COSMETIC RESHUFFLING OF PORTFOLIOS) MIGHT POSSIBLY HELP PRESERVE THE REVOLUTION, BUT A NEW DRA TEAM WOULD ALSO PROBABLY HAVE TO CONVINCE THE AFGHAN POPULACE THAT "NEW APPROACHES" TO BOTH ISLAM AND MOSCOW WOULD BE UNDERTAKEN. IN THIS CONNECTION, HOWEVER, THE PRESENT LEADERSHIP IS UNLIKELY TO OPT VOLUNTARILY FOR ITS OWN DESTRUCTION, REGARDLESS OF THE AMOUNT OF SOURCE OF OUTSIDE PRESSURE. AS A CONSEQUENCE -- AND IN THE ABSENCE OF INDIVIDUAL ASSASSINATIONS, A POSSIBILITY WHICH CANNOT BE RULED OUT -- THE KHALQI LEADERS WILL PROBABLY FORGE AHEAD WITH THEIR CURRENT EFFORTS TO STAMP OUT THE OPPOSITION BY FORCE, A POLICY WHICH WILL PROBABLY RESULT IN INCREASED FIGHTING IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, HIGHER LEVELS OF SOVIET SUPPORT, AND, EVENTUALLY, POSSIBLE DIRECT SOVIET INTERVENTION TO "SAVE THE REVOLUTION."

14. THE OPPOSITION IS NOT TEN FEET TALL: DESPITE THE PROBLEMS IT HAS CREATED FOR THE KHALQI REGIME, THE OPPOSITION FACES ITS OWN OBSTACLES, AND THE DENISE OF THE DRA IS BY NO MEANS INEVITABLE. FOR EXAMPLE, THE INSURGENTS, (PERHAPS BY DESIGN) HAVE YET TO CAPTURE AND HOLD ANYTHING LARGER THAN A TOWN (ALTHOUGH LARGE AREAS OF THE COUNTRYSIDE ARE NOW "OFF LIMITS" FOR GOVERNMENT FORCES, ESPECIALLY AFTER NIGHTFALL). THERE APPEARS TO BE NO IDENTIFIED OPPOSITION LEADER WHO CAN COMMAND NATION-WIDE ALLEGIANCE, AND, ACTI-REGIME EFFORTS REMAIN UNCOORDINATED AND WITHOUT ANY APPARENT OVERALL PLAN. TO DATE, THE OPPOSITION HAS BEEN PRIMARILY SPURRED BY THE REGIME'S OWN MISTAKES AND HEAVY-HANDEDNESS, FACTORS WHICH ARE ESSENTIALLY NEGATIVE MOTIVATIONS. SHOULD THE KHALQIS AVOID FURTHER MAJOR MISCALCULATIONS OR REVEAL SOME CLEVER POLITICAL PLOYS OF THEIR OWN, AND SHOULD THE INSURGENTS BE UNABLE TO ORGANIZE THEMSELVES UNDER A UNIFIED LEADERSHIP, IT IS UNCERTAIN HOW LONG NEGATIVE INCENTIVES CAN SUSTAIN THE HANDSHIP AND SUFFERING NECESSARY TO OVERTHROW A DETERMINED AND WELL-ARMED REGIME. STRESS, ATTRITION, AND TENSION ARE PRESUMABLY NOT LIMITED ONLY TO THE KHALQIS, AND, IN THE PRESENT ENVIRONMENT, "VICTORY" MAY WELL GO TO THE OTHER SIDE THAT CAN SIMPLY AVOID LOSING.

